Book Review

Jana Mohr Lone and Michael D. Burroughs, *Philosophy in Education: Questioning and Dialogue in Schools*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman& Littlefield, 2016, 256 pp.

It has been almost half a century since Matthew Lipman, recognized as the founder of the Philosophy for Children movement, published *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*, the first novel written to help preuniversity students engage in philosophical questions in the classroom. Since then, the Philosophy for Children (P4C) movement has developed steadily in different parts of the world, albeit more unevenly in some countries than in others. In the English-speaking world, the most rapid proliferation of P4C has taken place in the United Kingdom followed by Australia, rather than in the United States of America, where the movement was founded. In the last decade, most of the English-language books suitable as schoolteachers' introductory reading to P4C have come from these two countries, instead of the United States.

Philosophy in Education: Questioning and Dialogue in Schools breaks this dry spell. Written by Jana Mohr Lone and Michael D. Burroughs, the book primarily targets basic education teachers

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who are seeking to incorporate philosophical inquiry into their classes. Mohr Lone is a known figure in the field of philosophy for children. More than twenty years ago, she founded the University of Washington Center for Philosophy for Children. She remains the center's director today, apart from being an affiliate associate professor at the University of Washington's department of philosophy. Burroughs, on the other hand, is a senior lecturer of philosophy at Pennsylvania State University. At the same university, he is also the associate director of the Rock Ethics institute and an affiliate faculty member of the College of Education. In addition, Mohr Lone and Burroughs are president emeritus and vice president, respectively, of the Philosophy Learning and Teaching Organization (PLATO)—an American nonprofit organization founded by Mohr Lone to promote philosophy in K–12 classrooms.

Mohr Lone and Burroughs' book has four parts: the first part argues for the inclusion of philosophical practice in pre-university education. The second explores a pedagogical approach to facilitating philosophical practice in the classroom. The third part is a collection of sample lesson plans. The final part, the most theoretical, draws on the philosophical concepts of recognition and identity to explore the potentially positive effects that philosophical education can have on children and adolescents.

The first pages of the book distinguish the practice of philosophy (philosophical questioning and dialogue) from the academic discipline of philosophy. It makes the case, both to university philosophy departments as well as to schoolteachers and school administrators, to expand the notion of legitimate philosophical practice by introducing philosophical practice from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Drawing from their own experience of

facilitating philosophical inquiry among children and adolescents as well as previous literature on the subject, the authors then paint a broad picture of what philosophical practice looks like in schools, in the tradition of Lipman's Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach. They then identify three key activities of school-based philosophical practice—wondering, questioning, and reflecting—and explore each in turn.

The second part of the book examines philosophical practice in classrooms from the perspective of pedagogy. It begins by characterizing philosophically-informed dialogical education as a kind of learner-centered approach. This section is, in my view, the weakest section of the book. It does not question the conventional but problematic distinctions between teacher-centered and learner-centered pedagogy, nor the equally problematic dichotomization of "traditional" and "progressive" education. Rather, the authors seem all too willing to accept these problematic distinctions for the purpose of marketing the P4C approach to school administrators seeking pedagogical trends that will tick the "learner-centered" box. This weak discussion, however, is followed by a strong chapter on "philosophical sensitivity," a topic that Mohr Lone has written about elsewhere. The authors give an account of philosophical sensitivity—that is, a sensitivity to philosophical ideas and questions—and argue that it is a foundational facility to engage in philosophical practice. They present philosophical sensitivity not just as a facility that teachers ought to strive to cultivate in pupils, but also one that teachers need to develop within themselves in order to facilitate philosophical discussions well.

Over the past few decades, champions of Lipman's P4C approach have sought to develop his community of inquiry

method in different ways, leading to a family of related but also slightly different methodologies. In the next chapter of the book, Mohr Lone and Burroughs introduce their own version of the community of inquiry approach, which they name the community of philosophical inquiry (CPI), emphasizing (more than some other versions of the method) the responsibility of the facilitator to ensure that the discussion remains properly philosophical.

The third part of the book is a collection of sample lesson plans that use the CPI approach, divided by age band (elementary school, middle school, and high school). The authors helpfully identify the broad philosophical area under which each lesson plan falls (e.g. philosophy of art, ethics, metaphysics, etc.). The lesson plans are well-thought-out, and include contributions from P4C practitioners other than the book's main authors. One thing missing in this section, though, is an account of how these lesson plans can be fit into the structure of existing school curricula. In the Philippine context, these lesson plans will be most useful to teachers teaching either Introduction to Philosophy of the Human Person or the new *Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao* that is designed to be a preparatory subject for philosophy. These lesson plans can also be of value to reading or social studies teachers who have enough flexibility to set aside time for philosophical discussion in class. Beyond the basic education level, instructors of undergraduate philosophy subjects may also benefit from reading this section, as they can easily adapt some of these lesson plans for their university-aged students. Unfortunately, teachers of Math or Science who might want to introduce philosophical inquiry in their classrooms will not find much useful material in these pages.

The fourth and final part is the most philosophical section of the book. Here, the authors draw from academic political philosophy as well as published accounts of other P4C practitioners to reflect on the social dynamics of a classroom that engages in this type of philosophical practice. Using Charles Taylor and Axel Honneth's accounts of recognition and identity-development, they argue that a classroom that engages pupils in philosophical practice has the potential to help them develop a positive sense of identity. On the other hand, they anticipate problems arising from social inequalities in the classroom due to gender, ethnicity or income, and summarize some teaching strategies to address these. While the book discusses social inequality with the American classroom in mind, teachers in other countries and cultures might find parallels in their own contexts.

Pre-university philosophy continues to find increasing acceptance in classrooms around the world. Among the most recent books on the topic, Mohr Lone and Burroughs' volume does not provide the best scholarly treatment; for that, the *Routledge International Handbook of Philosophy for Children* (edited by Maughn Rollins Gregory, Joanna Haynes and Karin Murris; and published in 2017) is a stronger contribution to the field. However, as an initial text for someone who aspires to be a P4C practitioner, *Philosophy in Education: Questioning and Dialogue in Schools* is a worthy introduction.

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